

Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims replaces all prior versions and listings of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1-54. (Canceled)

55. (Currently Amended) A tissue fastener comprising  
a shaft having a generally rigid member disposed thereon for lodging the shaft within soft  
tissue, and

a generally rigid tissue engaging head disposed at an end of the shaft and having a  
maximum transverse cross-sectional length longer than the maximum transverse cross-sectional  
length of the shaft, the tissue fastener having a longitudinal axis extending along a maximum  
possible length from an outer end of the member to an outer end of the head, and the head having  
a maximum longitudinal cross-sectional length along the longitudinal axis shorter than the  
maximum transverse cross-sectional length,

a region of the shaft being formed of a woven mesh providing transverse flexibility and  
longitudinal extensibility to render the head movable with respect to the shaft.

56. (Previously Presented) The tissue fastener of claim 55 wherein the region comprises  
substantially an entire length of the shaft.

57. (Previously Presented) The tissue fastener of claim 55 wherein the member and the  
head are molded onto the mesh.

58. (Previously Presented) The tissue fastener of claim 55 wherein the member  
comprises at least one barb.

59. (Previously Presented) The tissue fastener of claim 55 wherein the fastener is made from polymeric material.

60. (Previously Presented) The tissue fastener of claim 55 wherein the fastener is made from bioabsorbable material.

61. (Previously Presented) The tissue fastener of claim 55 wherein the shaft is hollow and defines an interior passage, the head including an opening in communication with the passage.

62. (Previously Presented) The tissue fastener of claim 61 wherein the passage is open at a distal end of the shaft.

63. (Previously Presented) The tissue fastener of claim 61 wherein the passage is closed at a distal end of the shaft.

64. (Previously Presented) The tissue fastener of claim 55 wherein the head has a flat distal surface.

65. (Previously Presented) The tissue fastener of claim 55 wherein the head has a toothed distal surface.

66. (Currently Amended) A tissue fastener comprising  
a hollow shaft defining a substantially void interior passage and having an outer wall at least partially defining an exterior surface of the tissue fastener,  
a generally rigid member disposed on the shaft for lodging the shaft within soft tissue,  
and

a generally rigid, solid tissue engaging head disposed at an end of the shaft and having a maximum transverse cross-sectional length longer than the maximum transverse cross-sectional length of the hollow shaft,

the shaft being relatively flexible between the member and the head to render the head movable with respect to the shaft.

67. (Previously Presented) The tissue fastener of claim 66 wherein the shaft comprises a mesh extending between the member and the head.

68. (Previously Presented) The tissue fastener of claim 66 wherein the head includes an opening in communication with the passage.

69. (Withdrawn) Apparatus comprising

a tissue fastener including a hollow shaft defining a substantially void interior passage and having a member disposed thereon for lodging the shaft within the tissue, a solid tissue engaging head disposed at an end of the shaft and including an aperture, a region of the shaft being relatively flexible to render the head movable with respect to the shaft, and

an insertion tool removably received by the tissue fastener by extension through the aperture.

70. (Withdrawn) Apparatus comprising

a tissue fastener including a shaft having a member disposed at a distal region of the shaft for lodging the shaft within the tissue, and a solid tissue engaging head disposed at a proximal end of the shaft and including an aperture, the shaft being relatively flexible between the member and the head to render the head movable with respect to the shaft, and

an insertion tool removably received by the tissue fastener by extension through the aperture, the insertion tool comprising an engagement portion for engaging the member.

71. (Withdrawn) A method for making a tissue fastener comprising providing a shaft having a member disposed thereon for lodging the shaft within soft tissue, and a tissue engaging head disposed at an end of the shaft, the tissue engaging head having a maximum transverse cross-sectional length longer than the maximum transverse cross-sectional length of the shaft, and

making a region of the shaft of a woven mesh providing transverse flexibility and longitudinal extensibility to render the head movable with respect to the shaft.

72. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 71 further comprising making the region comprise substantially an entire length of the shaft.

73. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 71 further comprising molding the member and the head onto the mesh.

74. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 71 further comprising making the tissue fastener from polymeric material.

75. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 71 further comprising making the tissue fastener from bioabsorbable material.

76. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 71 further comprising providing the shaft with an interior passage, and forming an opening in the head in communication with the passage.

77. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 76 further comprising opening the passage at a distal end of the shaft.

78. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 76 further comprising closing the passage at a distal end of the shaft.

79. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 71 further comprising providing the head with a flat distal surface.

80. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 71 further comprising providing the head with a toothed distal surface.

81. (Currently Amended) A tissue fastener comprising  
a hollow shaft defining a substantially void interior passage along an entire length of the shaft and having an outer wall at least partially defining an exterior surface of the tissue fastener, and

a generally rigid member disposed on the shaft for lodging the shaft within soft tissue, and

a generally rigid solid tissue engaging head disposed at an end of the shaft, the head including an opening in communication with the passage and having a maximum transverse cross-sectional length longer than the maximum transverse cross-sectional length of the hollow shaft,

a region of the shaft being relatively flexible to render the head movable with respect to the shaft.

82. (Previously Presented) The tissue fastener of claim 81 wherein the region comprises substantially an entire length of the shaft.

83. (Previously Presented) The tissue fastener of claim 81 wherein the region comprises a woven mesh.

84. (Currently Amended) The tissue fastener of claim 81 wherein the flexible material region comprises a mesh.

85. (Previously Presented) The tissue fastener of claim 84 wherein the shaft comprises a mesh material, the member and the head being molded onto the mesh.

86. (Previously Presented) The tissue fastener of claim 81 wherein the member comprises at least one barb.

87. (Previously Presented) The tissue fastener of claim 81 wherein the head is disposed at the relatively flexible region of the shaft.

88. (Previously Presented) The tissue fastener of claim 81 made from bioabsorbable material.

89. (New) A tissue fastener comprising  
a shaft having a member disposed thereon for lodging the shaft within soft tissue, and  
a tissue engaging head disposed at an end of the shaft and having a maximum transverse cross-sectional length longer than the maximum transverse cross-sectional length of the shaft,  
a region of the shaft being formed of a woven mesh providing transverse flexibility and longitudinal extensibility to render the head movable with respect to the shaft, the fastener being made from bioabsorbable material.

90. (New) A tissue fastener comprising  
a hollow shaft defining a substantially void interior passage and having an outer wall at least partially defining an exterior surface of the tissue fastener, and  
a member disposed on the shaft for lodging the shaft within soft tissue, and  
a solid tissue engaging head disposed at an end of the shaft, the head including an opening in communication with the passage and having a maximum transverse cross-sectional length longer than the maximum transverse cross-sectional length of the hollow shaft,

a region of the shaft being relatively flexible to render the head movable with respect to the shaft, the shaft being formed of a mesh material and the member and the head being molded onto the mesh.

91. (New) A tissue fastener comprising  
a hollow shaft defining a substantially void interior passage and having an outer wall at least partially defining an exterior surface of the tissue fastener, and  
a member disposed on the shaft for lodging the shaft within soft tissue, and  
a solid tissue engaging head disposed at an end of the shaft, the head including an opening in communication with the passage and having a maximum transverse cross-sectional length longer than the maximum transverse cross-sectional length of the hollow shaft,  
a region of the shaft being relatively flexible to render the head movable with respect to the shaft, the tissue fastener being made from bioabsorbable material.